

Indian Rose Annual - IRA 2011

Patio Teas – A new Class in the making?

M.S.Viraraghavan

Rose experts have always stressed that bringing in the genes of new rose species can lead to unexpected results some of which can be very interesting and beautiful indeed. I never expected that I would have a chance of proving this theory correct, which has happened with the new line of 'Patio Teas', referred to by Arun Patil, in his write up on 'Minifloras' in this annual.

It all started when I began crossing *R. clinophylla* with the dark pink Tea rose, 'Mrs B.R.Cant' which does well in India. Out of a large number of seeds harvested from this cross only two germinated, out of which only one made it to maturity. This was a rather weak growing plant with single flowers in pink, but repeat flowering - the latter quality does not often manifest itself in direct crosses with species. This seedling was re-crossed into 'Mrs B.R. Cant' to produce a dark pink Tea like rose nicknamed 'Pink-Pink'. Taking the strain further, 'Pink- Pink', was crossed into the Noisette climber 'Rêve d'Or' which does very well under Indian conditions. A most unexpected result was the emergence of several seedlings, all very dwarf, (not more than 1 foot high after several years) bearing flowers of the Tea rose type, but smaller. There was a wide color range, ranging from light pink, dark pink, lilac and apricot with a lot of variety in flower form, ranging from H.T. form, to cup form, to old rose form. One seedling which stood out from the rest was a short climber in yellow shading to apricot brown but sadly once flowering, unlike its sister seedlings which flowered continuously.

Further crosses of the dwarf 'Rêve d'Or' x 'Pink Pink' seedlings x Tea roses produced several short plants which looked like typical Tea roses but considerably dwarfer, not more than a foot high under the cool Kodaikanal conditions, but likely to be somewhat taller on the plains. One of these is pictured herein.

Bringing in the China roses into the 'Rêve d'Or' series has produced another type of dwarf Tea, or should I call it 'dwarf China' roses with a very

interesting flower form, like a chrysanthemum with quilled petals. The China rose used in this cross was an extraordinary old variety discovered by the eminent Italian rose collector, Mr. Vicky Ducrot, as well as the great plant botanist Martyn Rix of the U.K, in the 'Monastery of the Ten Thousand Camellias', in Lijiang, China. The ancient camellia bush growing in this temple is reputed to bear 10,000 flowers every season. The resultant seedling is pictured alongside.

This range of Patio Teas is now being tested out for suitability under standard garden conditions and hopefully, will be released in the near future. If all goes well, these new kinds should be well suited for today's smaller gardens or for pot culture.

Copies of the original

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"Hill View" Fern Hill Road, Kodaikanal - 624 101. Tamilnadu

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Reve d'or X *R. clinophylla* derivative

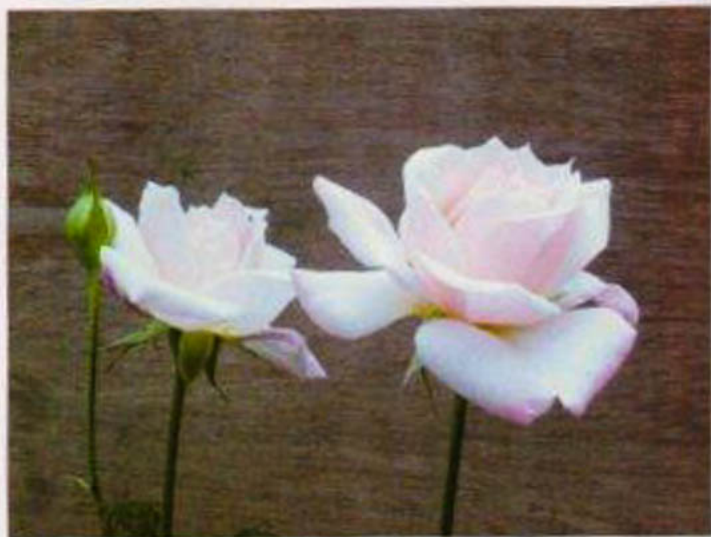


***R. clinophylla* Derivative X Ten Thousand Camellias
Temple China**

Photos by M.S. Viraraghavan



Padmasambhava (Lotus Born)



Narendra

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